

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-313***

***July 16, 2004***

***Operations and Services***

***MARINE AND COASTAL WEATHER SERVICE PROGRAM, NWSPD 10-3***

***SPECIAL MARINE WARNINGS***

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**NOTICE:** This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>

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**OPR:** OS21 (B. LaMarre)

**Certified by:** OS21 (T. Pierce)

**Type of Issuance:** Routine.

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***SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:*** This directive supersedes NWSI 10-313, dated July 8, 2003. This directive includes the optional “pathcast” bullet in the Special Marine Warning format section; expands guidelines for issuance criteria; provides a note to short-duration non-convective wind events in relation to Small Craft Advisory, and Gale, Storm, and Hurricane Force Wind Warnings (reference NWSI 10-310, Coastal Marine Forecast Services; and NWSI 10-301, Abbreviations and Definitions for details related to these terms). This directive also includes the Universal Geographic Code language; and updated examples in the Appendix.

Signed

July 2, 2004

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Director, Office of Climate,  
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Date

## SPECIAL MARINE WARNINGS

<u>Table of Contents:</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction .....	3
2. Special Marine Warning (SMW) .....	3
2.1 Mission Connection .....	3
2.2 Issuance Guidelines .....	3
2.2.1 Creation Software .....	3
2.2.2 Issuance Criteria .....	3
2.2.3 Issuance Time .....	3
2.2.4 Valid Time .....	3
2.2.5 Universal Geographic Code (UGC) .....	3
2.2.6 Product Expiration Time .....	3
2.3 Technical Description .....	3
2.3.1 MND Broadcast Line .....	4
2.3.2 MND Header .....	4
2.3.3 Content .....	4
2.3.4 Format .....	4
2.4 Updates, Amendments and Corrections .....	5
Appendix	
A. Examples of Special Marine Warnings .....	A-1

1. Introduction. This procedural instruction provides detailed information on a product Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) issue concerning ongoing or imminent marine weather hazards. Special Marine Warnings (SMWs) provide the marine community with vital information to protect life and property.

2. Special Marine Warning (product category SMW).

2.1 Mission Connection. Special Marine Warnings protect life and property. WFO forecasters issue special marine warnings for their coastal areas of responsibility to provide advanced notice to mariners of potentially hazardous weather conditions. Special Marine Warnings will not be issued in the Offshore Waters Forecast (OFF) or High Seas Forecast (HSF), except in designated areas along the East Coast.

2.2 Issuance Guidelines.

2.2.1 Creation Software. WFOs will use WarnGen to issue Special Marine Warnings.

2.2.2 Issuance Criteria. WFOs should issue Special Marine Warnings for short-duration (up to 2 hours) sustained marine thunderstorm winds or associated gusts of 34 knots or greater; and/or hail 3/4 inch or more in diameter; and/or waterspouts.

Exception: In very unusual cases, families of cold air funnel type waterspouts may remain over an area (such as over the lower Great Lakes) for several hours. In these cases, an SMW may be issued having a valid time longer than 2 hours. Also, in these cases only, appropriate Coastal Waters Forecasts (CWFs) or Great Lakes Nearshore/Open Lakes Forecasts (NSH/GLF) should be amended to headline such events.

Note: Short duration (up to 2 hours) non-convective winds over water should be handled with a Small Craft Advisory (SCA), or Gale, Storm, or Hurricane Force Wind Warnings. There is no minimum wind duration requirement for SCA's or Gale/stronger warnings.

2.2.3 Issuance Time. SMWs are non-scheduled, event-driven products.

2.2.4 Valid Time. SMWs are valid from the time of issuance until the expiration time.

2.2.5 Universal Geographic Code (UGC). Special Marine Warnings will contain marine-based, areal UGC codes.

2.2.6 Product Expiration Time. The product expiration time should not exceed 2 hours, except as noted in section 2.2.2.

2.3 Technical Description. Special Marine Warnings will follow the format and content described in this section.

2.3.1 Mass News Disseminator Broadcast Line. SMWs should include the broadcast line “BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED.” If a state does not require EAS activation for SMWs, the broadcast line will read “BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED.” The term “BULLETIN” is used when information is sufficiently urgent to warrant a breaking into a normal broadcast.

2.3.2 Mass News Disseminator Header. The SMW MND Header is “SPECIAL MARINE WARNING”.

2.3.3 Content. SMWs will be issued in standard bullet format, as outlined in NWSI 10-1701, Text Product Formats and Codes.

SMWs may be issued while a small craft advisory, gale, storm or hurricane force wind warning (not associated with a tropical cyclone warning), is in effect. When a tropical cyclone warning is in effect, however, SMWs should only be issued for waterspouts.

For events impacting both land and water, separate warnings will be issued.

2.3.4 Format. The format of the SMW can be seen in Figure 1. This product is available in industry standard encoding and languages, and may include, but not limited to, American Standard Code for Information Interchange, Extensible Markup Language, Wireless Markup Language and HyperText Markup Language.

<p>(WMO HEADER) (ISSUANCE DATE TIME) (AWIPS ID) (AREAL UGC CODE[S])-(EXPIRATION TIME)-</p> <p>BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED SPECIAL MARINE WARNING NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE (CITY)(STATE) (VALID TIME) AM/PM (LOCAL TIME ZONE)(DAY)(DATE)</p> <p>THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HAS ISSUED A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* SPECIAL MARINE WARNING FOR...(MARINE FORECAST AREA AFFECTED)</li><li>* UNTIL (ENDING EFFECTIVE TIME)</li><li>* AT (TIME)...(DESCRIPTION OF STORM EVENT, MOVEMENT, IMPACT ON LOCATIONS, etc.)</li><li>* PATHCAST (Optional; include if storm impacts are not mentioned for affected locations/landmarks in the above section/bullet.)</li></ul> <p>CALL TO ACTION STATEMENT</p> <p>LAT...LON (Mandatory list of latitude/longitude points outlining the forecaster-drawn polygon in WarnGen)</p> <p>\$\$ FORECASTER NAME (Optional)</p>
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Figure 1. Special Marine Warning (SMW) Format

2.4 Updates, Amendments and Corrections. Updates and amendments are not applicable. WFOs will reissue Special Marine Warnings for significant grammatical errors, or format errors in marine zones already covered by a warning. WFOs will issue Marine Weather Statements, as described in NWSI 10-314, to provide the public with follow-up information or to cancel all or part of an SMW.

**APPENDIX A - Examples of Special Marine Warnings:**

WHUS51 KLWX 171928  
SMWLWX  
ANZ530-531-172130-

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED  
SPECIAL MARINE WARNING  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE BALTIMORE MD/WASHINGTON DC  
328 PM EDT MON MAY 17 2004

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN STERLING VIRGINIA HAS ISSUED A

\* SPECIAL MARINE WARNING FOR...  
CHESAPEAKE BAY FROM POOLES ISLAND TO SANDY POINT, MD...  
CHESAPEAKE BAY NORTH OF POOLES ISLAND, MD...

\* UNTIL 530 PM EDT

\* AT 313 PM EDT...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED  
SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS FROM 23 MILES NORTHWEST OF CARROLL ISLAND  
TO 20 MILES NORTHWEST OF BALTIMORE HARBOR.

\* THUNDERSTORMS WILL PASS NEAR...  
BALTIMORE HARBOR TAYLOR ISLAND...SPESUTIE ISLAND

MARINERS CAN EXPECT WIND GUSTS OVER 35 KT...LARGE HAIL...LOCALLY HIGH  
WAVES...DANGEROUS LIGHTNING AND HEAVY DOWNPOURS. BOATERS SHOULD  
SEEK SAFE HARBOR IMMEDIATELY UNTIL THIS STORM PASSES.

INTENSE LIGHTNING IS OCCURRING WITH THIS STORM. IF CAUGHT ON THE OPEN  
WATER STAY BELOW DECK IF POSSIBLE...KEEP AWAY FROM UNGROUNDED  
METAL OBJECTS.

MARINERS SHOULD SEEK SAFE HARBOR IMMEDIATELY. TAKE THE NECESSARY  
PRECAUTIONS TO SAFEGUARD LIFE AND PROPERTY.

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LAT...LON 3961 7665 3916 7697 3913 7624 3969 7556

NWSI 10-313 July 16, 2004

WHUS53 KAPX 152044  
SMWAPN  
LMZ345-363-152200-

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED  
SPECIAL MARINE WARNING  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE GAYLORD MI  
443 PM EDT TUE APR 15 2003

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN GAYLORD HAS ISSUED A

\* SPECIAL MARINE WARNING FOR...  
THE MICHIGAN WATERS OF LAKE MICHIGAN FROM MANISTEE TO SLEEPING  
BEAR POINT

\* UNTIL 600 PM

\* AT 440 PM...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A  
STRONG THUNDERSTORMS ALONG A LINE EXTENDING FROM 35 MILES SOUTH  
OF ROCK ISLAND PASSAGE TO 36 MILES NORTHWEST OF MANISTEE...MOVING  
EAST AT 40 MPH. THE THUNDERSTORMS WILL IMPACT THE NEARSHORE AND  
OPEN WATERS OF LAKE MICHIGAN FROM MANISTEE TO FRANKFORT THROUGH  
THE REST OF THE AFTERNOON.

THESE STORMS ARE CAPABLE OF PRODUCING STRONG WINDS AND HAIL.  
MARINERS CAN EXPECT HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND IF POSSIBLE SHOULD  
HEAD FOR SAFE PORT IMMEDIATELY. BE SURE ALL HANDS ARE WEARING  
FLOATATION DEVICES.

LAT...LON 4480 8715 4462 8714 4460 8609 4486 8610

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WHUS52 KMFL 161332  
SMWMIA  
AMZ651-161430-

BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED  
SPECIAL MARINE WARNING  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MIAMI FL  
932 AM EDT WED APR 16 2003

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN MIAMI HAS ISSUED A

**NWSI 10-313 July 16, 2004**

\* SPECIAL MARINE WARNING FOR...

COASTAL WATERS FROM DEERFIELD BEACH TO OCEAN REEF, FL OUT 20 NM...

\* UNTIL 1030 AM EDT

\* AT 927 AM EDT...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A WATERSPOUT 6 MILES EAST OF FORT LAUDERDALE...MOVING SOUTHWEST AT 10 MPH.

A REPORT OF A FUNNEL CLOUD WAS RECEIVED FROM A PILOT EAST OF FORT LAUDERDALE. A WEATHER OBSERVER AT POMPANO BEACH ALSO REPORTED A FUNNEL CLOUD 25 MILES TO THE EAST. SHOWERS OVER THE NEARSHORE WATERS OF THE ATLANTIC WILL CONTINUE TO BE CAPABLE OF PRODUCING WATERSPOUTS THIS MORNING. BOATERS SHOULD QUICKLY MOVE AWAY FROM DEVELOPING WATERSPOUTS...AS THEY CAN EASILY SWAMP OR CAPSIZE SMALL BOATS.

LAT...LON 2610 7989 2625 7999 2621 8010 2597 8012

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